

give approximately 700 acres of their land to enlarge the wilderness for access through 7 miles of wilderness. This is being objected to by the Department of Interior and by many of the environmental community.

I hope, as we return from our recess, we can reflect on the human merits, so we do not have to address additional obituaries of people who died because of their inability to get medical care and have simple access that every American enjoys with the exception of people in the village of King Cove, AK.

Mr. President, let me take this opportunity to wish you a very pleasant recess, and the other officials who are here in the Senate Chamber.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from Alaska is recognized.

SELF-DETERMINATION FOR PUERTO RICO

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I would like to advise my colleagues that today, as Chairman of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, I submitted to both the Democratic and Republican members of that committee, a chairman's mark specifically on the issue of self-determination for Puerto Rico. It is certainly a responsibility of my committee to provide and address the eventual disposition of the status of the American citizens in Puerto Rico, and the purpose of the draft is to provide them with an opportunity to express their dispositions on future political aspirations of the choice among commonwealth, independence, or statehood.

Also, I advise my colleagues, this is the centennial anniversary of Puerto Rico under U.S. sovereignty—100 years that Puerto Rico has been under the U.S. flag. The people of Puerto Rico, as U.S. citizens, have been in a process of transcending to something that would focus in on certainty. There is a growing effort to try to bring some finality to the disposition of the status of Puerto Rican Americans because they do not participate as other U.S. citizens in the election of representation in the House and Senate. As a consequence, many of them are looking towards a definitive alternative.

We have had hearings. We have listened to individuals from all sides of the debate. We have reviewed all testimony. We have had input from three political parties, certainly, as well as the Governor. I have directed the chairman's mark in the hopes that it will provide a brief, accurate and neutral definition of the status of the options. The mark is drafted to advance the process of self-determination for

our fellow citizens of Puerto Rico. It is strictly advisory in its legislation. It does not mandate introduction of future legislation. It does not require any fast track.

I grew up living in a territory—my State of Alaska. We had taxation without representation. Many people in the State of Alaska, filing their income tax returns, used to write in red, "filed in protest." It made them feel a little better. It didn't do any good. But the point is these people living in Puerto Rico are entitled to certainty, and it is an obligation of the Congress to address a final resolution.

I think our committee has a moral and constitutional responsibility to address the situation in Puerto Rico, but we don't want to get involved in the politics of Puerto Rico. That is not our business. I know the Governor intends to call a plebiscite this December. He may or may not choose to use the definitions that we provide him. Whether or not the Senate acts is another story. We have a short time left, but in my view this is an ongoing effort of the committee, a systematic progression. The definitions we have come up with and the structure in the previous bills, either the House bill or the Senate bill, have not been as neutral as we would have liked and would have involved, I think, more activity in local politics. We have attempted to be more objective.

It is my hope the measure that eventually comes out of our committee will provide the Governor language that is accurate and neutral. The draft chairman's mark clarifies citizenship under each option. That was very important, in our conversations with all groups. The classification and clarification of citizenship was very important. Under commonwealth, citizenship provided by statute will continue to do so. Under separate sovereignty, citizenship would end. Under Statehood, citizenship is, of course, provided under the Constitution, so there is no question about that.

Finally, I want to make it clear so long as Puerto Rico remains under U.S. sovereignty its residents, of course, will be U.S. citizens. If Puerto Rico wants separate sovereignty then, of course, U.S. citizenship would end.

I provided members of the Energy Committee a copy of this mark for their review over the recess. After receiving members' comments, members of the committee, again, will discuss this matter in September.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator is recognized.

THE PRESIDENT'S OATH OF OFFICE

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, the oath of office taken by the President of the United States is majestic and simple; as a matter of fact, it is eloquent. The President simply swears that he will faithfully execute the office, the highest office of the land, and that he will preserve, protect and defend the United States Constitution.

In its enumeration of his duties, the Constitution of the United States directs that the President "take care that the Laws be faithfully executed." So the President is directed by the Constitution to "take care that the Laws be faithfully executed." The core values of American self-government are concentrated in the Presidency.

Do we expect the President of the United States to be a patriot? Of course. Not only do we expect that from the structure of our government, we have grown to expect it because that has been established as a precedent by President after President after President.

Do we expect the President to love freedom? To serve the people rather than to serve himself? To act with respect for the rule of law? To uphold the idea in America that there are no kings, that the highest rank in this culture is the rank of citizen? To put the institution of the Presidency above his own personal interests? I think it is fair to say that all of us would respond to those inquiries with a resounding "Yes." We do expect that. We have high expectations.

Do we expect the President to be truthful? Yes. To keep his solemn oath of office? Yes. Certainly. These are qualities—the love of country, the commitment to public service, the obedience and supremacy of the law—that we expect in the behavior of the President. He or she is to be a national model for honesty, integrity, and respect for the law.

It has been shocking to me that defenders of President Clinton have begun to suggest, however, that such is not the case, that our aspirations are without foundation, that somehow we are dreaming an impossible dream to think that the President would be a model. Indeed, we are told he is not even responsible for telling us the truth. Some of his defenders have begun to suggest that lying under oath can be acceptable conduct in a President or that the President is generally above the law and that the President would not need to honor, for instance, a lawful subpoena to a grand jury—the idea that somehow the President's power is so substantial that the President would not have to respond in the event that he were called.

Jack Quinn, former White House counsel and a friend of many in this Chamber, argues in the pages of the Wall Street Journal that the President simply is not the subject of law in the same way as other citizens in an article entitled "Clinton Can Avoid the